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Beyond Afghanistan: Recharging European Foreign and Security Policy

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Introduction

Slowly but surely attaining competencies to initiate and implement foreign policy on its own behalf, the European Union (EU) embarks on elaborating an essentially postmodernist policy approach that emphasizes civil, moral and normative instruments and goals. However, the Union, a basically ideational endeavor, has to perform in an imperfect material world, where multiple vices of nation states continue to disguise themselves in ostensibly virtuous, but in essence hypocritical and selfish, foreign policy stances.

Would it be accurate to contend that the Union will continue to pursue an invariably benign and ethics-based political course abroad regardless of the kind of environment it steps in? Will this approach alter once the Union acquires hard power military capabilities? To address these questions, this paper firstly identifies the EU's individual foreign and security policy style as distinguished from a traditional international course of a nation state. It then proceeds with examining legal deficiencies of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and focuses on the appropriate modifications introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon in the nature of CFSP institutional basis.

Next, an impact that the French, Germans and the British have on the formation of EU modus operandi is elucidated so as to grasp the drivers and enablers of the CFSP in its current shape. Finally, the article considers Europe's attempts to integrate hard power components of its CFSP, and argues that while their consolidation may force the EU to re-examine its role vis-a-vis NATO and redraw its international image, the fundamental principles of EU world policy approach will remain basically intact.

Liberalpolitik vs. Realpolitik

The EU's individual foreign policy style can be coined Liberalpolitik (LP) for it is notably contrasting to traditional Realpolitik (RP) of a nation state. The essential features that distinguish LP are:

- Promotion of good governance, civilian norms, human rights and democracy;
- Commitment to multilateralism and international law;
- Reluctance to use military force as a means of practical policy;
- Emphasis on crisis prevention and crisis management, state –building and peace through cooperation;

- 'Carrot' diplomacy combined with appeasement, persuasion and shaming

There are several fundamental points that distinguish both "politiks" from each other in terms of interests, principles and values, and the role that soft and hard power play in their implementation:

- LP is explicitly peace-prone. RP is implicitly about preparing for war;
- RP can easily sacrifice principles in the name of interests, and is inclined to apply double standards;
- At least in the case of major nation states—the United States, Russia and China—RP is inclined to resort to pressure by mostly material, tangible means, known as hard power, with military force as its vital component, while LP emphasizes persuasion instead of coercion, prefers diplomacy over force, and fosters institutionalization of economic interdependence, therefore primarily utilizing soft power tools;
- Unlike RP, LP is consistent in its persecution of illiberalism regardless of its origin;
- LP is more coherent in its pursuit, while RP is prone to narrow vision and tends to overstate some issues and policy directions while overlooking or ignoring other important security domains and geographical areas.

What forces make the EU act in a particular way? Why accommodation is its most preferable policy route, and appeasement - an option of the first choice in the arsenal of foreign policy tools, while more assertive approaches too often are eventually rejected? Is it because of moral absolutism, political expediency, or ordinary fear? These questions cannot be answered with certainty without considering both the major physical and normative factors that shape the nature of EU strategic culture. In terms of the physical determinants, one should contemplate the role that the EU's physical assets—natural resources, territory and population play in shaping the patterns of its international behavior. It becomes clear then that the Union's lack of strategic depth, scarce energy resources, and aging population impose serious natural constraints on any type of conflicting or conflict-risking actions that EU strategy planners might wish to perform.

One is to consider the structure of the continent's population to understand why the Europeans are trying to keep a cautious and conciliatory profile with regard to issues involving Islamic states and territories ranging from Iran to Palestine. The EU is trying to accommodate Muslims precisely because they constitute a significant share of inhabitants in Europe's major cities like Paris, London and smaller towns. With their birth rates exceeding the non-Muslim Europeans, the former will account for 20 percent of the entire EU population by the year 2050.^[1] Noteworthy, while some EU participants are involved in the U.S.-led military operations in Afghanistan, the EU per se is not. It is not unlikely that it is the growing share of Muslims in the Union's population and the geographical proximity of North Africa and the Middle East that make the EU per se not only an omnipresent but invariably an appeasement-seeking player in the Islam-related matters. Farther, the Union's critical dependence on oil and gas deliveries from Russia make the EU's bargaining positions in a variety of other crucial issues like democracy and human rights, strategy and security, asymmetrically weak.

The limited parameters of Europe's physical geography, its poor resource base and aging population are the innate objective causes that structurally restrict application of tough power and invoke mitigation of the EU's combined intervention capabilities. Together with ethics-based norms, liberal values, and pacifist beliefs they foster a strategic culture that sees lethal components of power as too dangerous and double-edged to be applied in the real-world situations. Meanwhile, economic sanctions and other civil power tools like policing and law-enforcement missions are conceived as the most appropriate means of projecting the EU's power. Not surprisingly, the Union's major policy paper on strategy—*A Secure Europe in a Better World*—employs a very discreet wording when touching upon the matters implying the use of force. Notably, the paper invariably emphasizes that the EU adds "particular value" in "developing

operations involving both military and civilian capabilities."² This cautious approach manifests itself in a military strategy that—as it will be illustrated further—is fundamentally deprived of pre-emptive strike planning. The individual nuclear arsenals of the UK and France are viewed there as means of national deterrence strategy, but are basically irrelevant for the EU at large. Moreover, the EU's combined military machinery since the end of the Cold War has attained mostly a symbolic nature conducive to the purposes of a strong image, but hardly intended for a practical usage.

It is often the case that at the first sight LP looks like a manifestation of weakness and inaction, arguably because of its overly idealistic nature. But it is exactly because of its overly material character that it is improbable for its policy alternative—traditional RP—to attach equal importance to all strategic problems at hand without compromising efficacy of its actions. Indeed, LP is idealistic, but in the pursuit of ideals it is not paranoiac, and does not seek to change the world by any means overnight as another LP's rival cause—the Messianic RP (as one may coin neoconservatism)—attempts to do. The fundamentalist inflexibility compels the neocons to use military force excessively, while the political, economic and human costs of their enterprises as a rule prove incommensurate with the results. The natural limits of hard power do not enable their masters—realist or neoconservative—to become all-penetrating agents of control in critical geostrategic domains. This can be exemplified by the price, which due to the presumption of unlimited preponderance on the part of the Messianic RP proponents in Washington, the United States had to pay for being bogged down in Iraq—the apparent fading of U.S. global supremacy.

In contrast, LP is targeted at making changes on the ideational level reasonably; by and large the European intellectual communities and politicians devise external policies in a cost-efficient way, which inter alia enables them to gradually exercise a comprehensive strategy of enlightenment worldwide. Noteworthy, unlike RP, the liberal cause serves its purposes if not almost regardless of tangible resources at hand, but certainly with a much lesser dependency on them. In many cases though, RP has indeed proved to be more efficient than LP in the pursuit of traditional power. But it is arguably because it has so far been primarily assessed on its own system of values, and because LP has so far lacked an appropriate agency to promote its cause.

EU foreign policy approaches to human rights and failing states issues are interesting examples of different behavioral modes exemplified by the Union in contrast to the United States. Thus, China's crackdown on Tibet protestors in 2008 has caused a harsher criticism in the EU, particularly from the European Parliament, while the United States remained more restrained. Both Western players conduct huge volumes of trade with China that predisposes their dependency on China's market and imports of Chinese goods. Both—Americans and Europeans—are the strong advocates of human rights and democracy. Yet, in the case of Europe such a policy was delivered in a relatively stronger albeit still a timid fashion, while Washington was keeping a strikingly low profile. The reason for this discrepancy is that U.S. policymakers were overly concentrated on Iraq and Afghanistan, which is an apparent political scantiness at the expense of other vital geographical directions including East Asia.

Treatment of failing states is another realm of divergence between European and American policy approaches. In Iraq, for example, the United States continues to rely on its military contingent whose task has become prevention of inter-confessional violence, and, in essence, of the country's partition. In the former Yugoslavia, the focus of the European Union's efforts has become a comprehensive state-building assistance to the earlier suppressed autonomies, while de-facto fostering their secession with the view of ultimately bringing ensuing sovereign entities together with the existing Balkan states into EU structures.

By and large LP reflects the specific nature of the EU at its current stage of development—neither a mere sum of states, nor a superstate. In terms of a superstate, the Union does not possess enough resources in its own competence except a limited assistance fund (a new EU foreign relations suprema will be able to appropriately utilize the fund's money). The EU's capabilities to

project power are therefore primarily confined to non-military tools, which, by definition, do not enable its policies to have teeth. Noteworthy, the degree of assertiveness exemplified in international relations by some EU member states, e.g. France and Britain, is unparalleled to that of the Union. For example, Paris made bellicose statements with regard to nuclear-minded Iran, sent French paratroopers with a peacekeeping mission to Chad, and called for boycotting the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing because of China's crackdown on Tibet. The British provide the second-largest (after the United States) military contingent within the framework of NATO International Assistance Force (ISAF) to fight the Taliban in the south of Afghanistan.

While France and the UK were sometimes projecting their power in an assertive fashion, the EU per se has been mostly keeping a conciliatory and benign profile. Yet, the last decade appears to mark a turning point in the EU's global defence and security stature. This is connected with EU military operations in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM—CONCORDIA), Congo (ARTEMIS and EUFOR RD Congo), and currently in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Operation EUFOR—ALTHEA), and the Somali coast (EU NAVFOR Somalia). Even though the scope of these operations has so far demonstrated a limited ability and desire of the Europeans to jointly apply hard power in crisis situations, they manifest a remarkable shift in the pattern of EU international policy that will be analyzed farther in the paper.

EU Foreign Policy Making and Its Modification Under the Lisbon Treaty

While there is an extensive literature identifying the EU as a global power (see Bretherton 2006, Telò 2006, etc), a non-commercial side of Europe's globality hypothesis is presented rather as a prospect, than a reality. Indeed, while the Union is the world's leading assistance donor, and does occupy the central place in the global commercial web of trade and investment, its record of liberal power projection tracks down to its immediate periphery. How one can explain the fact that although the EU has substantial economic interests in the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, and Central Asia, its lever as of liberalism sponsor is stunningly unimpressive in these regions of spectacular illiberalism? The Union, one may argue, is still a predominantly realist power, than a real force in the vanguard of global liberty promotion.

The feeble and re-active character of EU foreign policy can in many respects be explained by an imperfect, unfinished nature of its institutional basis. The competence of the Union's High Representative of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is confined to a narrow scope of functions, primarily focused on coordinating national foreign policies of the member states and negotiating on their behalf with third parties. The post's status does not permit its holder to design and pursue a policy on behalf of the Union; this legal deficiency hinders the EU's ability to perform abroad promptly, efficiently and pro-actively. Not surprisingly, the Union's external actions have been initiated predominately by its most powerful nation states like France, Britain and Germany as well as by a country holding the six- month rotating Presidency of the European Council.

The Lisbon Treaty—finally ratified by all member states, and coming into force since 10 December, 2009—will consolidate decision making in the realm of the CFSP. While not taking competencies in the realm of foreign and security policy from the member states, the Treaty lays down a principle of shared competencies between them and the European institutions. The European Council and the Council acting unanimously will define and implement the CFSP guided by joint proposals of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Commission in the areas of external action. The new EU foreign policy head—the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy—is authorized with competencies to not only "conduct" the Union's common foreign, security and defence policy, but also to initiate it by contributing 'by his or her proposals to the development of that policy' (Article 13). A new EU "foreign minister" will be assisted by the diplomatic corps of a European External Action Service working "in cooperation with the diplomatic services of the Member States." The High Representative shall be one of the Vice-Presidents of the Commission and shall preside

over the Foreign Affairs Council—a body that "shall elaborate the Union's external action on the basis of strategic guidelines laid down by the European Council and ensure that the Union's action is consistent."^[4]

As the Lisbon Treaty augments the EU competencies in defining, devising and implementing the CFSP, it entitles the European Council with the task of threat assessment, and strengthens EU operational capacity in the realms of security and defence "drawing on civil and military assets. The Union may use them on missions outside the Union for peace-keeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security ... using capabilities provided by the Member States."^[5]

While the appropriate intentions of EU countries currently may not seem anything more than a mere declaration for the outsiders, one should not underestimate them. The integration processes in the European Union and its predecessors have been built on the basis of imperative legal implementation. The latter dates back to the principles of Roman institution building: what becomes law is bound to be implemented. Accordingly, the ensuing institutional setting of the Union in the realm of defense and security is likely to ultimately contribute to a universal perception of the EU as of a 'genuine' global power, and thereby facilitate an expansion of its positive role beyond the adjacent territories.

EU-3 Impact on CFSP Formation

The current institutional deficiencies of the EU in the realm of foreign and security policy restrain the Union's ability to act internationally in the way it is expected to act (a "capability–expectations gap" as defined by Hill ^[6]). However, under the circumstances its major member states attempt to make up for the power paucity of its supranational institutions through shaping the Union's international agenda and inspiring collective actions on its behalf. There are many examples to illustrate that France and Germany who are leading the concert of the EU's most influential and ambitious participants, are seeking to frame its common foreign policy agenda in line with their individual strategic vision and national priorities.

The division of labor between these two countries in shaping Europe's *modus vivendi* is of paramount importance for streamlining its evolving *modus operandi*. Thus, from Robert Schuman and Jean Monnet to Jacques Delors and to Nicholas Sarkozy, France and the Frenchmen have been generating intellectual and political impetus for the bloc's advancement and cohesion. In parallel, from Ludwig Erhardt and Konrad Adenauer to Helmut Kohl and to Angela Merkel, Germany has been excelling in setting up industrial, social, ecological and economic standards for the rest of Europe. So, France can be named an indispensable political innovator of the EU, while the Federal Republic can be seen as the Union's major economic engine. Both powers promote liberal incentives—those that advance the historic traditions of the French Revolution—equality, freedom, solidarity to the European and universal heights, and those that originate in the German economic culture—responsibility, punctuality and thrift. Since Germany and France are the most significant political, economic and industrial powers in the Continental Europe, their national standards cannot but be projected and re-affirmed at the European level. Above all, since the Franco-German partnership has established itself as a locomotive of the European integration, the synergy of their most advanced hard and soft power elements constitutes the foundation of an evolving EU strategic culture and international behavior.

This being said, the role of the third major member of the EU—Britain—should certainly not be underestimated. With the UK's deepening involvement in the European project, the EU's CFSP has an opportunity to gain from the progressive foreign policy (PFP) of the Labour governments of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown that prioritize the international rule of law and multilateral institutions along with the universal conception of human rights and its ethical dimension. ^[7]

The recognition of the remarkable impact that the French, Germans and the British have on the formation of the EU's modus operandi doesn't mean ignoring an appropriate influence of other European nations. The reality, however, is that the Big Three have more capabilities in projecting their values and norms within and beyond the Union's framework. This is precisely because their comparative advantages in certain areas of low and high politics excel that of the other nations due to a higher weight of Franco-British-German leverage in the pertinent domains.

Yet, divergence of national interests, quite often exacerbated by political ambitions of power-holders, can present a serious problem to fostering European unity in the realm of foreign policy. Thus, France's 'special relations' with its former colonies prompted President Nicolas Sarkozy to propose a plan for a Mediterranean Union that would set grounds for sub-regional integration under the EU's patronage. This idea, however, was met with suspicion in other European capitals, and in particular in Berlin. For Germans, who have to provide for the bulk of the Union's funds, it is—as some experts believe—especially irksome to see "that Mr Sarkozy may try to use EU money to take the political credit for projects on the southern shore of the Mediterranean, home to several ex-French colonies."[\[8\]](#)

The apparent incongruence of national interests among EU member states should not, however, disguise the prevalent trend to a concerted foreign and security policy to endure. The growing economic, political and institutional interdependence between the EU's major participants tends to smooth over their disagreements, at least publicly. Besides, as proponents of the constructivist theory would reasonably argue, the learning experience of coordinated efforts with time translates into a more homogeneous policy as rational choice would favor a strong single—voiced Europe over a Europe of many hardly audible voices. [\[9\]](#)

Hard Power's Arrival to Liberalpolitik?

A wide-spread perception of the EU as of a 'weak' power derives from emphasizing the lack of synergy in the aggregated military capabilities of the Union rather than on reckoning the cumulative military resources of its member states. In fact, the latter make Europe the world's second largest military power with \$ 289 billion in military budgets in 2008 and a 2 million strong military personnel, of which, however, only 5 percent is deployable. [\[10\]](#) As military spending is strongly unpopular in Europe, an individual EU member state, if compared to the United States, spends on average a much lesser share of GDP on defence. In the majority of the EU's NATO member countries except the UK, France, Greece and Bulgaria this indicator is notably less than the 2 percent standard envisioned by NATO guidelines. According to IISS estimates, it continued to fall from 2 percent in 2000 to an average of 1,75 percent in 2006.[\[11\]](#) Should the Europeans' shares be on par with the United States and given that the EU's cumulative GDP exceeds that of the United States, the EU-27 would become the largest defense power in the world. [\[12\]](#)

The demilitarized pattern of national budget spending in European countries is often explained by the security heaven that they have been living in since the end of the WWII. Indeed, the creation of NATO with the nuclear-armed United States as a security guarantor for its West European allies could not but have produced a satellite type of security mentality in Europe. By and large, this mentality has been based on a comforting belief that the European security is mostly America's business. In practical terms, the emergence of NATO and its survival after the Cold War have contributed immensely to Europe's reluctance to share pertinent security costs and risks with its all-mighty Atlantic ally. Moreover, the hothouse type of strategic mentality cultivated in the European capitals for the last six decades have proved detrimental to the idea of a Strong Power Europe.

The problem of functional overlapping between the EU and NATO is looming large, as a growing number of European countries become participants of both structures. As a workshop policy paper on the Transatlantic relations argues, the Europeans have "to choose whether to provide their military assets under NATO or EU auspices." The situation presents a serious problem if not

an impasse because each of these countries "has one set of forces and one defense budget to meet NATO, EU, and national commitments." [13] As the EU is heading toward a closer military integration, it would be more and more problematic for the Europeans to uphold their commitment to NATO without jeopardizing their relevant obligations within the Union. Arguably, this situation can be conceived as transitional: in the years to come EU countries may wish to revise their participation in NATO despite an enormous structural pressure from the latter's bureaucracy, which has vested interests in preserving this organization intact. Apparently, abandoning NATO is only a hypothetical perspective since it risks resulting in a security split between the Old and the New Continent, and might end up in withdrawal of U.S. nuclear shield commitments to the Europeans. This notwithstanding, should such a withdrawal really take place, it is not preordained that security of the EU would be critically and irreversibly undermined. Should London and Paris agree to integrate their nuclear forces under a joint command under the auspices of the European Defence Agency (EDA)—an option that would definitely require a fundamental revision of national security and defence concepts across the both sides of La-Manche—the Europeans would most certainly get a world-class deterrence capability.

To overcome its embarrassing "expectations–capabilities" gap, the EU needs to supplement the predominantly soft power content of the CFSP with sufficient hard power capabilities in terms of intervention and deterrence, and the Union's institutional reform appears to be proceeding in this direction. Indeed, hard power components of the CFSP as envisioned by the Lisbon Treaty should enable the Union to perform a variety of interventionist tasks including "joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilization." [14] The necessity to foster EU military integration in the view of global desecuritization seems to be well understood by European strategists and policymakers as they rely on feedback from pro-Strong Europe intellectual communities in major EU states. Contrary to a wide-spread opinion of an alleged European negligence in the realm of security, European experts appear to be completely aware of evolving strategic challenges to the Continent that most certainly would demand an upgrading of hard power components of the Union's cumulative might.

In the next decades, the EU will inter alia have to coop with a probability of scarce world energy resources, and in this instance its interests might clash with that of the emerging powers of the East—China and India:

By 2025, Europe will be externally dependent for 90% of its oil and 80% of its gas. China and India in particular will drive global energy demand, and seek new sources in central Asia, Africa and the Middle East. In this and other ways, European security interests may be directly or indirectly challenged by tensions arising not only in the near neighbourhood but also further afield. [15]

The prospects of state failure in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, and in the post-Soviet region, nuclearization of Iran, Russia's imperial temptations, and radicalization of Islam are among the challenges the could be dealt with only while involving both soft and hard power components of the CFSP, including ESDP crisis management capabilities. Elaborating its *Long-Term Vision for European Defence Capability and Capacity Needs*, the EDA identifies a "typical ESDP crisis management operation" as an "expeditionary, multi-national and multi-instrument" endeavor. Furthermore, the European strategists emphasize the need for a "comprehensive approach" that would combine EU "hard and soft power instruments and [coordinate] civilian, military, governmental and non-governmental bodies to collectively achieve the necessary political effects." The doctrine holds that "the objective of interventions is not "victory" as traditionally understood, but moderation, balance of interests and peaceful resolution of conflicts—in short, stability." EU defense experts assume that 'the level of force required to achieve such outcomes may, in some scenarios, be substantial.' What is understood by a 'European approach' is characterized by a policy "different in ambition and character ... with a stronger emphasis on civil-

military interoperability, and on the tactical level, albeit nested within NATO conceptual frameworks."[\[16\]](#)

In a different strategy paper, *Beyond 2010—European Grand Strategy in a Global Age*, produced by the Bertelsmann Foundation (July 2007), it is suggested that "it is the member-states that lead security in Europe with the Union acting as the aggregator and agent of the states." The paper calls for a number of decisive measures with the view to advance ESDP capabilities. The document's authors believe that in order to consolidate Europe's strategic efforts and increase the EU's operational capabilities it is necessary to institutionalize and sponsor ESDP. To this end, it is proposed to set up a Security and Defence Group under the authority of the European Council to oversee all of the Union's security activities. The Group would have Britain, French, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland and Spain as permanent members, while other EU states would have rotating membership. The Group would include task-oriented working groups "charged with looking at specific security issues, such as climate change, water shortage, the changing demand for food, [and] population growth."[\[17\]](#)

Above all, the paper emphasizes the necessity for Europe to reach a competitive edge in the realm of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). To this end, the EDA is recommended to develop "a range of strategic enablers that inter alia would encompass limited space-based assets (reconnaissance, navigation and communications satellites), global reach unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs), together with advanced communications and effective ground surveillance. The EU should also examine the feasibility of affordable theatre missile defence, effective suppression of enemy air defences (SEAD), offensive electronic warfare (OEW) capabilities, fast strategic lift (air and sea) and precision-guided munitions."[\[18\]](#)

The 1990's decade of calamity in the Western Balkans, and the subsequent NATO interventions revealed a low degree of EU's power projection capabilities, and prompted the Union to foster its defence cooperation.[\[19\]](#) The Lisbon Treaty envisages a much more integrated military force at the EU's disposal that has ever existed in the history of the European bloc. One may reasonably expect that with time an enhanced military component of EU strategy would produce a relevant psychological change within the European elite: with consolidation of common hard power resources at hand, the European statecraft would be more confident in applying force if diplomacy fails. This assumption is in line with the energetic efforts of France's President Nicolas Sarkozy that are aimed at fostering defence cohesion of the EU-27. During his six-month presidency in the EU in 2008, Sarkozy put forward a number of proposals attempted to foster European military cooperation. They include creation of a 'common intervention force' as the first step towards a common EU army; establishment of an independent EU intervention planning centre to be based in Brussels; building a EU 'common market' in armaments and inception of common European arms control policy; Europeanization of military planning and other activities in NATO to take place with France's re-joinment; harmonization of military education within the EU, and other unorthodox initiatives in the realm of EDSC.[\[20\]](#)

An evolving international security environment presents a larger number of diverse challenges both for the Europeans and the Americans as the security risks tend to be multiplying. A Republican or a Democratic U.S. administration may wish to pursue innovative types of foreign policy, emphasize fresh priorities and goals, and apply new instruments to mitigate risks. But the fundamental issue of U.S. commitment to sacrifice the lives of millions of its citizens in the name of Euro-Atlantic solidarity would remain unanswered. Moreover, in the post-9/11 world the United States might unintentionally expose Europe to security problems that the latter would not like to be involved or would prefer to deal with autonomously. This is why even though LP would preserve its principle distinctions from RP, the former will have to include a military component of its own.

The Sarkozian France appears to have elaborated a smart response to the EU's NATO dilemma. While committing more troops to NATO's military operation in Afghanistan and re-joining NATO's military structure, France seeks to preserve strategic maneuverability and enhance the European defence cooperation (EDC). Together with their European colleagues, French strategists view the EDC as an indispensable tool that would eventually enable the EU to operate as an autonomous and respectable international actor.

Is 'Soft' Liberalpolitik Endurable?

LP in its 'soft' version might be considered as an impeccable policy guideline for Europe if only other international actors were receptive to the reason of wording, and if there were any serious indications that they would be eager to perform in an equally idealistic and peace-prone fashion. The real world, however, presents a gloomier, if not an ominous picture to make one believe that a benign strategy could be a universal peace remedy under all circumstances. Alas, the proliferation of WMD looks like an irreparable attribute of the new century, and the old deterrence doctrines that some experts were quick to bury with the passage of the Cold War are gaining revitalizing significance. Indeed, Russia, Iran, or radical fundamentalist groupings in the Middle East are emerging as potential EU adversaries capable of targeting Europe with WMD as a means of balancing or an anti-Western jihad.

A pivotal strategic challenge that Europe is facing now and is about to most certainly face in the future could be condensed to the following. Should the West become involved in a confrontation with the East, the latter may be tempted to choose a European site as an object of revenge. A non-Western adversary would be even more encouraged to strike as they become inclined to believe that a pacifist and feeble Europe would not dare to retaliate. And this temptation might be exacerbated by an assumption that the United States would not want to stand up for their European allies for it would expose American cities to a nuclear strike or a new wave of deadly terrorist attacks. This proposition suggests that a European response would ultimately emerge as a two-fold strategy: a) Europe will be gradually changing its foreign policy paradigm from a soft to a tougher one, and b) they will eventually have to rely on their own integrated deterrence potential rather than continue to hope on an untestable U.S. commitment.

Conclusion

In contrast to an individual state's traditional foreign policy of Realpolitik that seeks to promote national, in fact egoistic, interests, the European Union embarks on elaborating an unusual policy pattern of advancing supranational norms and values that push self-interest out of the international system and substitute anarchy with order. While dealing with others, a big nation state mainly resorts to hard power that accentuates the use of force and other means of coercion as key instruments of foreign and security policy, whereas the EU's Liberalpolitik utilizes an arsenal of soft power tools like diplomacy, assistance and commerce, and attempts to avoid violent conflict at any cost.

While a nation state seeks an absence of war—a condition known in peace studies as "negative peace," the EU promotes a qualitatively new phase in the universal human society known as "positive peace" that designates elimination of structural violence. Yet, the mission of expanding EU virtues beyond its immediate neighborhood has been sufficiently hampered by deficiency of a consolidated hard power mechanism at the Union's autonomous disposal. The EU has to act in the world where military might is still seen as an attribute of power and a means of respect. To attain efficacy and globality to its rationale, the EU's foreign policy will have to overcome its timidity, while adjusting to imperfection of the perilous international environment.

To cope with multiplicity and complexity of threats and challenges that Europe is facing when pursuing its international course, the EU will inevitably have to supplement its soft power policy

with the core elements of hard power. European defence integration would enable the EU to receive independent and visible means of intervention and deterrence. This will enable the EU to overcome the gap between expectations and capabilities as other members of the international community will perceive the EU as an authentic global power. As a result of the impending necessity to adjust, the EU will become a more federalized entity sooner than later. Accordingly, its foreign policy will become more assertive and less appeasing.

Yet, while becoming more "realistic," it would not become less unique. In the mid-term, Europe's Liberalpolitik will probably become at the first glance closer to Accommodationist Realpolitik of the Obama administration, or vice versa. Yet, the principal distinction between the pertinent European and American policy models will essentially persist—both in terms of application of force and agency of interest.

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Dr. Sergey Smolnikov does research and teaching in International Relations. He has published extensively on foreign policy, global security and international political economy with a focus on Europe. He has taught in the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) in Tokyo, Japan, the University of Toronto and York University in Canada.

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http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story_id=10737734, last accessed 16 March 2008.

9. For constructivist approach see Alexander Wendt. "Anarchy is what states make of it: The social construction of power politics," *International Organization* 46, No. 2 (Spring 1992): 391-425. Notably, with respect to Europe Wendt emphasized that "...decades of cooperation may have transformed a positive interdependence of outcomes into a collective 'European identity' in terms of which states increasingly define their 'self-interests.' Even if egoistic reasons were its starting point, the process of cooperating tends to redefine those reasons by reconstituting identities and interests in terms of new intersubjective understandings and commitments." (417).

10. *An Initial Long-Term Vision for European Defence Capability and Capacity Needs*. (European Defence Agency (EDA), 2006), available under <http://www.eda.europa.eu/genericitem.aspx?id=146>, last accessed 15 April 2009..

11. *The Military Balance 2008: The Executive Summary* (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2008), 2.

12. Author's calculation based on IMF 2008 estimate.

13. See NATO and the European Union: Improving Practical Cooperation. A Transatlantic Workshop Organized by the Institute for National Strategic Studies in Partnership with the Ministry of Defence of Finland (Washington, DC., March 20-21 2006), http://www.ndu.edu/inss/repository/outside_publications/michel/nato-eu_workshop_final_summary.pdf, last accessed 15 October 2008.

14. Treaty of Lisbon, note 4 above, Article 28.

15. *An Initial Long-Term Vision*, note 10 above, 7.

16. Ibid.

17. See *Beyond 2010—European Grand Strategy in a Global Age*. (Guetersloh, July 2007), available under <http://www.german-foreign-policy.com/en/fulltext/56124>, last accessed 15 June 2009.

18. Ibid.

19. See Wyllie, "The Kosovo Intervention and European Security: NATO's Pyrrhic Victory" in V.N. Koutrakou (ed.), *Contemporary Issues and Debates in EU Policy: The European Union and International Relations* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 23-37.

20. See "The French EU Presidency 2008—What to Expect," *Open Europe Briefing Note*, <http://www.openeurope.org.uk/research/frenchpresidency.pdf>, last accessed 15 June 2009.